
All work in India's film and television industry hub of Bollywood has been stopped today as thousands of technicians and actors have gone on strike over pay and conditions. With more, here's our South Asia correspondent Damian Grammaticas:

On the first day of this strike Bollywood has **fallen silent**. All productions in the world's busiest **film hub** have been halted. Everyone - from dancing girls to carpenters, lighting technicians to cameramen, soundmen to script writers - has **downed tools**.

Dinesh Chaturvedi, head of the Federation that represents 22 unions with over 147,000 members working in the film and television business said they'd decided to halt all co-operation with industry producers. He said union members, most of whom fill the lowest paid jobs, are protesting because of **abysmal pay**, long shifts that can often last for up to 36 hours and unpaid wages that can be **withheld** for up to six months leaving workers **on the verge of starvation**.

It's television productions **on tight schedules** like **reality shows** that are being **hit the hardest**. But Sushma Shiromanee of the Indian Motion Picture Producers Association said employers were not panicking. They will meet to decide their response to the strike on Thursday, she said, but are prepared **to hold out** for months if necessary.

Damien Grammaticas, BBC News, Delhi

Vocabulary and definitions

fallen silent	if a place falls silent, there is no activity in it
film hub	centre of film production
downed tools	stopped working
abysmal pay	extremely little money they get for their work
withheld	not paid (when due)
on the verge of starvation	here, with not enough money to pay even for their food
on tight schedules	that are produced quickly (e.g. because they have to be broadcast on a particular day each week)
reality shows	television or radio shows that deal with real people in real situations. Reality shows range from those depicting police operations and emergency rescues to those in which people divorce, choose marriage partners, or actively deal with their personal problems on air (definition by MSN encarta)
hit the hardest	affected (in a negative way) the most
to hold out	to continue the strike

More on this story: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/entertainment/7646404.stm>

Read and listen to the story and the vocabulary online:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/worldservice/learningenglish/newsenglish/witn/2008/10/081001_bollywood.shtml